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Madison, Wisconsin.

THE **Quill**

A MAGAZINE FOR WRITERS, EDITORS, AND PUBLISHERS

I Have to Watch Men Die

By Randy Fort

Unions in the City Rooms?

By Joseph A. Loftus

2,400 Per Cent Profit!

By James M. Hutcheson

Cash in on the Campus

By Carl S. Forsythe

Germany's Brownshirt Press

By Bice Clemow

Meet the Magazine Editor

By George F. Pierrot

At Deadline • Who-What-Where • As They View It

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THE QUILL

A Magazine for Writers, Editors and Publishers

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AT DEADLINE

QUILL writers take you this month into the execution chamber of the Georgia State Prison for Men; into turbulent Germany where Hitler's newspaper chain is playing an important part in his political maneuvers; onto the university campus; back to the State of Washington 50 years ago for a bit of journalistic history and to Pennsylvania where, in Scranton, is to be found a newswriters' union.

And if you enjoy these articles as the Editor did, you have some pleasant moments before you. Randy Fort, James M. Hutcheson, Joseph A. Loftus, Carl S. Forsythe and Bice Clemow are the authors and they turn out good pieces.

Recent weeks have brought a number of unusually interesting articles to the Editor's desk. No matter what else happens this winter, you are going to find every issue containing some article or articles of exceptional appeal.

LEST you may believe that QUILL writers use the personal pronoun too much, the Editor would like to explain that in such instances the use of "I" is at his request.

I like to read *personal* accounts, experiences and observations (call them "confession" type articles if you will), and I find most of you do too.

Let it be said, also, that most of the writers would rather not have the "I's" sprinkled so liberally through their copy, yet they have complied with the editorial request, "Tell your experiences frankly and in the first person."

YOU will recall, no doubt, that John H. Dreiske, formerly with the Detroit Mirror before that paper suspended publication and prior to that with the Chicago Tribune, wrote a piece for the October issue entitled, "Now That I've Lost My Job—"

In it he told how it felt to have a job kicked out from under one and related his subsequent observations.

Scarcely had the issue containing the article been placed in the mails than he had landed a job writing publicity for the speakers' bureau of the Republican National Committee at the Chicago headquarters. And I'll bet he's back in a city room ere long.

HERE'S a word for those readers of THE QUILL who are particularly interested in country weeklies. Her-

(Continued on page 11)

Unions in the City Rooms?

◀ "Never," Declares This Newspaperman in Telling
the Story of the Scranton Scribes' Organization ▶

By JOSEPH A. LOFTUS

BACK around the turn of the century, someone conceived the idea that the solution of the newspaperman's financial problem was unionism—real trade unionism, even as that of the bricklayer and other tradesmen.

It's still a mere idea, with only one unit of organization to keep the thought alive. That unit is at Scranton, Pa., the only guild of newspapermen in the United States operating ostensibly as a trade union.

What is more, trade unionism in journalism will never get beyond the stage of a mere idea in America. I say that arbitrarily. History and the facts are against its development, more so now than ever before with schools of journalism pouring out hundreds of graduates annually, their names elongated by letters and abbreviations the bricklayer would not understand.

The temperament, disposition, and the character of the men and their work are against such development. The plan has been tried and found wanting. Briefly, the only answer I can find is that newspapermen do not want their work measured by a yardstick. And justly so.

WHAT, then, is the answer to this Scranton anomaly? Why success there when all other attempts to organize have failed? Must there be an exception to prove the rule? Hardly. That's a platitude.

Only two possible explanations can be given for the success of such a union. One is that the organization holds the whip hand; that by sheer force of numbers, financial or moral strength, with the threat of a strike as its weapon, it forces concessions from the employers—publishers, in this case.

The other is that the publishers are the "giving" kind, in sympathy with the reporter's vocation, tolerant of his right to organize, and feel that he deserves remuneration as great, or greater, than the mechanical man in the adjoining composing room who, with the support of a powerful organi-

zation, wrings a stipulated sum each week.

In Scranton, the former explanation does not hold. The latter is partially true. All Scranton's publishers are not as benign as I have pictured above. E. J. Lynett, owner of the *Times*, is. With more circulation and more employes than all the other papers in the city, the *Times'* owner is the conference chief of the publishers, their spokesman formally, officially, and—most important to the newspapermen—actually. I believe, paradoxically enough, that the Scranton News-writers Union would be nonexistent today were it not for Ed Lynett.

He has seen to it that the Scranton newswriters never have had to battle, or threaten strike action, to get what they wanted. In short, the union has never been put to the test. Whether it could survive the test, I do not choose to say arbitrarily.

IT IS true the union is nominally allied with the tradesmen in the composing rooms. It is a unit of the International Typographical Union, pays

OBSERVATIONS made in this article on unionism in journalism and the Scranton News-writers' Union by Joseph A. Loftus, manager of the Harrisburg, Pa., bureau of International News Service, are based on personal experience and research.

While attending St. Thomas in Scranton, going to school by day and working in a newspaper office at night, Mr. Loftus was a member of the newswriters' organization.

Later, while studying for his master's degree at Columbia University, he took "Trade Unionism in Journalism" as the subject for his thesis and turned out a 20,000-word report after making a country-wide survey.

dues and assessments to it, receives its pension and death benefits in precisely the same fashion as the printers, and has the technical right to the strength and support of that organization in any conflict with the publishers.

I mean that if the newswriters felt they had just cause to strike they could expect the I. T. U. to sanction the move and, if necessary, call out the printers in sympathy with their demands.

I doubt if the I. T. U. would back up the newswriters to that extent. I gravely suspect, too, that the I. T. U. would snatch the opportunity to wash the newswriters off its books. This is not a mere hunch. They are not tales out of school. Surely the publishers have the same suspicion. It is not five years since International headquarters sharply notified the newswriters union that assessments must be paid more regularly. There have been no delinquencies to speak of since.

LESS than ten years ago the I. T. U. in convention adopted a resolution which will prevent the acceptance of any more newswriters' units by the parent organization. Generously and graciously the I. T. U. decreed that those already affiliated could remain, provided, of course, they maintained good financial standing.

The parent union had tired of issuing charters to newswriters unions and then withdrawing them a few months later. More than 25 charters were taken out in the last 30 years and in all parts of the country by groups of newspapermen who thought all they had to do was to wave the seal and sheet of engraving in the faces of their publishers and demand fatter pay checks.

Aside from the Scranton charter, only one other such document is extant today. That is in Milwaukee, but the so-called union there is insignificant inasmuch as the membership is confined to one newspaper, the *Leader*.

The Scranton News-writers Union was organized in 1907 after an abor-

tive attempt three years earlier. It has continued to operate uninterrupted. The publishers and the local union are parties to a wage agreement—on paper. There has never been a wage cut. Wages went up in the same ratio as the cost of living. The newswriters always negotiated after the printers finished. If the printers won a raise, the scribes got theirs with little trouble. The full-fledged reporter is paid about \$2 a week more than the printer—\$56 a week.

That is the minimum fixed by the wage agreement. The wage scale is graduated. The cub who is hired is on probation for a month. After that, if he stays, he joins the union and gets \$22 a week. Each year his salary automatically increases until the fifth year when it halts at \$56. The copy reader gets two dollars a week more, and the city editor five dollars additional.

These are the rates for afternoon

newspapers. In all classifications, from the cub to the city editor, the rate is two dollars higher for morning paper workers. The result is that the highest wage stipulated is \$68. The city editor who works nights gets that.

The union does not specify a salary for anyone higher than the city editor. The editorial writer is barred, while the managing editor, because he usually has risen from the ranks, may retain his membership but the union fixes no minimum salary for him.

IN questioning the strength of the union in a crucial stage, I do not mean to throw brickbats at the Scranton organization. I do mean to show that the newswriters there are of no different complexion than any other city where similar attempts at unionism failed. I mean to show, too, that Ed Lynett has been the wedge which kept ill will between newswriter and publisher from closing in and crushing the union. On his own paper he has

gone even farther. Ill will is an unknown quantity.

The union may not be the panacea for all the social and economic ills which beset the struggling reporter. It may not have made Scranton the utopia of journalism, for it has its disadvantages and inequalities as well as its merits. But it has accomplished a great deal. It has taken Scranton out of the class of cities notorious for the meager money paid to newspapermen, so meager, in fact, that they were paid less than the miners who worked under their feet in the bowels of the earth. Today, the Scranton reporter is paid considerably better than the average man doing similar work in any city of like size in the country.

I was glad the union existed when I worked there. I hope it will still be functioning if I ever go back. Just as earnestly, though, I hope Ed Lynett will still be there. If he is, I know I won't have to work for less money than the printer who sets my copy.

Meet the Magazine Editor

By GEORGE F. PIERROT

Managing Editor, The American Boy

A MAGAZINE editor must develop complex abilities. To choose manuscripts wisely, he must be genuinely interested in his reading audience—genuinely interested not only in its entertainment but in its everyday lives and problems and welfare.

He must be able to forget his own preferences, heeding first the preferences of his readers. He must be constructive and helpful. He must bring to manuscript choosing a broad sympathy and understanding, diversified knowledge, and a critical creative faculty that will enable him to sense a story's faults and know what to do about them. He must preserve the scientific attitude, and study his audience ceaselessly. If he does something, he must know why. In this way, and in this way only, can he find and correct his mistakes.

Toward his staff, the magazine editor must maintain the attitude of a skilled and friendly coach. He must so adjust each person's job as to get the maximum production from each.

He must see to it that each of his staff keeps developing. He must fit men for promotion; he must know when and how to replace. He must keep his staff on the aggressive, mentally; it must be in a fighting mood, and never stale. He must have the liking and respect of the staff, without letting familiarity breed laxness.

Toward writers, the editor first of all must know exactly what he wants, so that they will write for him with confidence. He must know his audience intimately, and be able to interpret it for them, should they need his guidance. He must be sympathetic with them, and understanding of their frequent childishness. He must, in other words, keep them enthusiastic, eager, and friendly. Their attitude will depend on his.

Toward the business department, the editor must understand administrative problems and be intelligently eager to help. He must so serve his reading audience as to keep renewal percentages high; these, and newsstand sales, are largely his responsibility. He should keep promotion in

mind, as the motivation for special circulation efforts can come from him. He should remember that a primary problem with a publishing company is the earning of a reasonable profit; to accomplish this most effectively his cooperation is constantly needed. He must budget his department, in salaries and in manuscript and art costs, and he must hold to this budget. He must watch inventory, and keep it low and fresh.

In general, an editor cannot be a cynic. He must have genuine affection for mankind, and sympathy and understanding. He must entertain his readers, and help them while he is doing it. He must identify himself with the stream of life, for his job is the arch-enemy of the cloister. He must see to his own development. Unless he is getting bigger, month by month, his policies will atrophy. It is impossible for an editor to know too much. There is need for every idea he can adduce or create. Every bit of knowledge that he can gather—by word of mouth or reading or travel—he can use.

2,400 PER CENT PROFIT!

THIS is the story of a newspaper that paid more than 2,400 per cent return in the first 10 months of its existence!

"Holy hellbox!" you may shudder from the despair of your 1931 "hang-over." "It is unfathomable, impossible!" But an ex-editor who has cherished the memory of that achievement through a half century, gives assurance of the veracity of the figure.

This is another of those tales of journalism in the days when it was plain "printin'." It is a tale from the far Northwest, so close to the Pacific that the salt-sea tang fills the air. It is of a pair of publishers who invested \$400 to establish the farthest west newspaper in America in 1882 and who reaped the rich reward of nearly \$10,000 in the first 10 months of publication. It is a story over which Greeley could have glowed with prophetic pride. The fact that it comes from a land famed for transplanted Paul Bunyan yarns and from an ex-editor known for his story-spinning propensity detracts not one whit from this narrative's reliability. The files, yellowed by 50 years, offer supporting evidence. But let us be on with the story.

THE wild rush of settlers to claim western lands under the homestead law as railroads opened the Northwestern territory, brought the two young publishers the opportunity for their phenomenal achievement. There may have been others who did as well. They were astute business men, those pioneers who set up the first clumsy printing presses wherever accommodations were available—behind blacksmith shops, above stores or in woodsheds.

This particular story is of the Montesano (Wash.) *Vidette*, a weekly now in the hands of Chapin Collins, University of Washington graduate. His associate, A. Wendell Brackett, is also a Washington graduate of a decade ago.

Struggling today in an agricultural and mill community of 2,500 people, fighting against the paralyzing blow to the lumber industry, this team finds slight consolation in the rosy story of the institutional skeleton.

THE motive of the *Vidette* founders in setting up their plant over the tiny settlement's grocery store was not primarily to sell news, but to capi-

Being Another of Those Stories of Journalism
In the Days When It Was Just Plain "Printin'"

By JAMES M. HUTCHESON

talize on the wholesale staking of timber claims. Before a land seeker could gain title to government holdings he was required to publish ten times in the nearest paper his "Notice of Application to Purchase Timber Land," and before the title passed he had to publish in six issues his "Notice of Final Proof." The land department was generous with the few publishers in the Northwest, and the legal rate was set at \$1 for each insertion of either notice, a figure equal to the Washington state legal rate today.

J. E. Calder, bewhiskered, rotund and jovial, still a prominent Montesano citizen, is the only partner living. He tells the story how he came as a 22-year-old printer from Iowa to join with J. W. Walsh, editor, long since deceased, to found the *Vidette* as a typical Far West weekly. *Vidette* was an army term for the extreme outpost, and the young publishers, original and ambitious, considered it a fitting name for America's western journalistic outpost, just 25 miles as the sea gull flies from the Pacific. Despite obsolete application of the name for the past

30 years, the paper has maintained its identity unbroken, a profitable and progressive journal through the years.

Mr. Country Editor, you may think you are handicapped through type shortage today, but you would smile complacently if you could look back into that little shop with its eight or ten fonts (Mr. Calder has forgotten the exact number) and little roller press, all bought for \$400 in Portland, Ore., and shipped out on the Columbia River, up the coast and into Gray's Harbor and the Chehalis River. You cannot blame Mr. Calder for chuckling today at the publisher who growls because he has no linotype magazine larger than 24-point or because he cannot afford that used cylinder press the daily paper in his county is replacing. Forty miles by horseback from the nearest paper, at Olympia, the territorial capital, and 150 miles from the nearest source of supplies, Portland, the *Vidette* publishers faced irksome mechanical problems long since vanished.

THE *Vidette* was a four-page paper, with the front and back printed from stock forms in Portland and shipped by horse each week. The inner two were set up and printed in the little shop above the town grocery. But there was a catch even in printing two pages.

"Type shortage was our biggest annoyance," Mr. Calder said. "We issued the paper Friday, but the first page had to be printed by hand Tuesday so we could redistribute the type to set the other page for Thursday printing."

But they were resourceful men, those printers of the western woods, and they turned many a stumbling block into profit.

"The knottiest problem I struck during my year on the paper," said Mr. Calder, who withdrew from partnership at the end of 10 months after the peak of business had passed, "was when a timber man brought in 57 notices for publication in the next week's paper. Our type was all tied up in the forms, but I couldn't

JAMES M. HUTCHESON, who contributes the accompanying lively article, is news editor of the Walla Walla Daily Bulletin.

He received his degree in journalism from the University of Washington in March, 1930. He was associate editor of the university daily while on the campus and a part-time reporter for the Seattle Daily Times during his senior year.

Following graduation, he became editor of the Clark County Sun, weekly of Vancouver, Wash., leaving that paper to accept a position with the Walla Walla Daily Bulletin.

Montesano, Wash., the locale of his article, was his birthplace and "home town" until graduation from the university.

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CASH IN ON THE CAMPUS

Colleges and Universities Offer Fertile Fields
Of Material for the Writer Trying to Freelance

WHILE so much is being said as to how and why professional journalists should employ extra time in writing off the depression, something might be recorded as an incentive to the future newspapermen still struggling with college textbooks.

Despite the contention that our collegians live in a little world all their own, boxed and housed so effectively that they barely hear the rumblings of the cruel world without, they are just as much aware of Old Man Depression today as the veteran newspapermen. I was graduated last spring and I know from experience. On all sides collegians are saying, "If I could only do something."

And for the energetic youth with some writing and creative ability that "something" is there merely for the taking. By that I mean the universities and colleges offer an exceptionally fertile field for young writers. The public is vitally interested in all news pertaining to the institutions of higher education, and in the thousands of young people attending them. Faculties boast of authorities in all fields of human endeavor and research work of world importance is being conducted daily in state and privately endowed laboratories on the various campuses.

Furthermore, the campus always has within its vicinity metropolitan newspapers and press associations which are interested in its happenings.

AT THE University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, for instance, the *Detroit News* maintains a bureau. One reporter handles the campus news and sports events, another writes of city occurrences, a woman tells of the weekly society events, and the director of the bureau is highly trained in the field of technical writing. This campus also has representatives from the *Detroit Times*, *Toledo News-Bee*, *Detroit Free Press*, *Associated Press*, *United Press*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Toledo Blade*, *Chicago Herald-Examiner*, and perhaps others on it.

Michigan is not alone as a favorite spot for press agencies and correspondents. Nearly every major uni-

By CARL S. FORSYTHE

Don't Hold Out!

VARIOUS articles detailing the experiences of journalism school graduates, unemployed newspapermen and others in combating the conditions brought to editorial rooms by the depression, have been appearing in *The Quill* from month to month.

This article, written by Carl S. Forsythe, formerly one of the editors of the *Michigan Daily* at Ann Arbor, is aimed particularly at the future newspaper or magazine writer who is still on the campus.

No payment is made for the articles. They are written and published with the idea that the experiences of one man may be of value to another trying to buck adverse times.

What have been your experiences these trying months? Have you anything to suggest or offer that will aid or interest other readers of *The Quill*?

versity in the country has a similar staff of writers at work each year. Holders of these positions change very quickly since, for the most part, they are filled by students who use them merely as financial stepping-stones until the cherished degree is obtained.

Once a start has been made the way is clear for the college journalist to build up a steady income. Football season annually presents a need for trained men who know the team and who are available to fill orders that pour in on big game days from various parts of the country. It is not unusual for college editors to receive telegrams asking for advances and covers on games, and when one looks over the personnel of the press box there is always to be found a goodly number of the so-termed "embryos" pounding out early leads, play by play accounts, and complete stories of some of the biggest games in the country.

WHEN the opportunity comes to get one of these jobs, the student journalist should take it and fill it to the best of his ability. One success soon leads to another and a little confidence in one's own ability often does wonders. One student acquaintance of mine financed his four years in college, supported a wife during those years, and at the same time bought and paid for a home.

But the collegiate journalist, once he has mastered the knack of peering into the editor's mind, need not confine his writings to the straight newspaper correspondence work. He should constantly be on the lookout for feature material. Art is nearly always necessary and often a good picture will sell an otherwise weak story.

I was pleasantly surprised the first time I submitted a feature article. It was the rah-rah type describing the devious ways college men and women finance their way through school. I knew little of the importance of having art at the time and merely sent it out with a faint hope that someone would think it worth using. To my surprise it appeared with accompanying comic drawings.

VARIOUS trade magazines are good markets for the wide-awake college student who wants to take a little time to discover just what is happening in the engineering laboratories. A popular scientific magazine or some trade journal is always in the market for articles based on scientific research, particularly if it is substantiated by leading authorities in the field. Art is easy to obtain for such material and professors usually are pleased with a chance for publicity.

Departments in various publications can often be utilized by the student in quest of markets. The amount of material accepted usually is small, but often short articles will bring four or five cents a word while longer stories and features in lesser publications bring no more than one-half or one cent a word.

Last year—and that was a depression year too—I knew a group of seven or eight students who found markets

(Continued on page 10)

Germany's Brownshirt Press

Militant Adolf Hitler Now Has 130 Newspapers
In Strategically Distributed, Successful Chain

By BICE CLEMOW

POLITICAL news is at a premium in turbulent Germany. Few, if any, newspapers in the world can boast the phenomenal growth of the 130 papers which the Hitler Brown-shirt "army" has distributed strategically throughout the nation. Despite the fact the country never has suffered greater economic stress, the same ardor which is expected by his followers to carry the militant Adolf Hitler into the German presidency or chancellorship at the next election, has been directed along journalistic lines to stimulate unheard of circulation and advertising increases throughout the Hitler "chain."

This unique experiment, dependent as it is on the strength and ultimate success of Hitler's nationalist-socialist party, is today yielding gratifying results, both in money and in spread of the party's political credo, in every section of jobless Germany. To understand that success it is necessary to appreciate that these 130 journals are sponsored by a highly integrated army-party nearly approximating in thorough organization America's standing troops. The Hitler papers are controlled in the various districts by generals in his disciplined and uniformed, but unarmed forces.

FOR instance, in Silesia, southeasternmost and typical of the 17 districts into which Hitler has divided Germany for party administration purposes *Gruppenfuhrer*, or "Major-General" Edmund Hienes has eight dailies and one weekly under his supervision. Hienes is a broad-shouldered soldier who was sentenced to death in 1927, and in 1929 reprieved, for his part in the political murders of 1922. Being a soldier, Hienes has journalistic limitations which he recognizes, so when he was named major-general for Silesia only 12 months ago, he appointed two deputies as "newspaper inspectors" for his division. *Sturmfuhrer*, or "Captain" Louis Engels, one of the inspectors for this territory of 200 by 80 miles, tells, a bit slowly but in good English, a story of overnight success full of fascination for editor, reporter or business manager.

"We now have these nine papers," he relates, "the dailies having a circulation of 100,000 and the weekly of 85,000. A year ago in October we had not one mark (24 cents), one typewriter, or even an office. In the mean-

time we have, in huge leaps, employed 140 men, bought 40 typewriters and made 100,000 marks (\$24,000) clear profit. That is good, is it not?"

By a stroke of what "Captain" Engels calls good luck, these nine political sheets have made money beyond all expectations. "Hitler told us to get some papers started, but not for making money. However, great business came anyway," he apologizes. "We have made so much money we are now making plans for beginning many other papers before Christmas."

In front of the "Brown House," Heines' headquarters in Breslau for the Silesian division, a life-size replica of one of the 30-seater German police cars is proudly displayed. That, too, was paid for from profits of these nine Silesian papers, and when, during elections, police have trouble with communist rioters, who are also political enemies of the Hitler "army," the Hitlermen jump into the "wagon" which their newspapers bought for them, and speed away to help the police.

NOT only have the nine papers, as indeed all the Hitler string, made handsome profits for the purchase of "army" equipment, but they have

IF THE Hitler movement succeeds in turbulent Germany, it will, in a large measure, have its newspapers to thank, Bice Clemow, former Snohomish (Wash.) newspaperman, observes in this interesting article.

The Hitler chain, he relates, is yielding gratifying results to its sponsors, both in money with which to purchase supplies for the Brownshirt forces and in the spread of the party's political credo.

Mr. Clemow, a former editor of the Daily at the University of Washington, recently visited Germany. He expects to spend a year in Europe, engaged in various forms of writing.

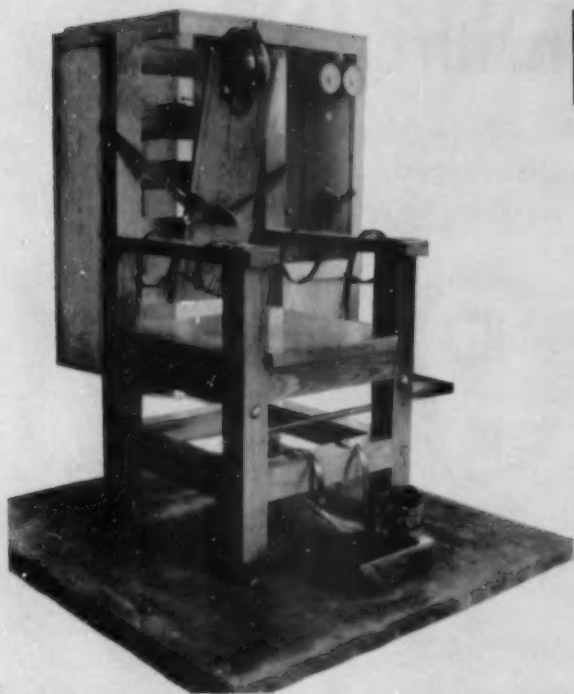
proven invaluable in spreading Hitler propaganda and strengthening the party. When "Major-General" Hienes came to Silesia last year there were only 10,000 men and no newspapers. Now there are nine newspapers, and 42,000 men uniformed either by their own funds, or by some one of the many wealthy sympathizers of the Hitler efforts, or profits from these papers. Thus, in a dual way, the newspaper is one of the most important agencies of the political party, as is true throughout all Germany. There are 4,693 papers published in the nation, and of these 2,243 avowedly or actually have some party allegiance and at least half the remainder a decidedly oblique leaning.

The Hitler "army" leaders show little interest in the mechanics of publication, most of the nine papers being printed as jobs. Inspector Engels explains that they would rather spend their profits for expansion than for presses and other equipment. The political news, comprising 50 per cent or more of the content of the eight dailies, is dictated and distributed from Breslau or Munich headquarters, local staffs being employed for solicitation of local items and advertising.

In a business way these Hitler newsmen show remarkable aptitude, as witnessed by a total circulation increase, daily and weekly, from nothing in October, 1931, to 185,000 in October, 1932. And they don't give their papers away, except for one- or two-week trial periods to those who are, or might be persuaded to be, converts to Hitlerism. In most of the nine instances the monthly subscription is 2 marks 30 pfennigs, about 57 cents.

THE *Deutsche Ostfront* (German East Front), published in Gleiwitz, a few miles from the Polish frontier, is the first of the nine to attempt street sale (2½ cents). This paper, typical of the Hitler Silesian string, was begun only three months ago when Oscar R. Fredrici, editor of a then independent weekly but for years an ardent Hitlerman, agreed to arrangements by which his paper became a daily under Hitler auspices. In three months he has increased his circulation from 3,000 to

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Seventy-six men had gone to death in this grim chair in the execution chamber of the Georgia State Prison for Men when this article was prepared.

I HAVE TO WA

An Article That Takes You Behind the Walls of the Execution Chamber

I'VE had to watch five men die in the electric chair in as many months as part of my job.

Although I say that I've had to watch these things, that does not imply that I have minded the job, for I haven't. After the first mental shock of witnessing executions, I have grown, despite their horrific features, not to avoid but to anticipate them.

When I first came from the metropolitan city of Atlanta to take a job with the *Times*, one of the two weekly newspapers in the considerably smaller city of Milledgeville, I came to learn something about the paper business. If the learning process included something of excitement, well and good. It did.

In Milledgeville is located, among numerous other Georgia state institutions, the State men's prison. Since September 14, 1924, when the legislature voted to substitute electrocution for hanging as the method of execution in the state, all "death" cases have been sent to the local prison, where the sentences have been carried out.

MY FIRST attendance at an execution was primarily because I was curious; of secondary importance was the fact that I might get some news out of the procedure.

That first visit will remain long one of my most vivid memories. Armed

then being after 10, I waited there for the event.

The day was cold. A storm was threatening. Terrific crashes of thunder rolled out of the southwest, coming close on the heels of sharp lightning flashes. Booming above even the most frightful thunderclaps came the voice of the condemned man. He was praying.

The combined elements sent queer little sensations up and down my spine. I grew nervous, and started pacing around the front prison porch. Still shaky, I walked down a hallway to the back porch of the building. There I ran squarely onto the body of a Negro who had died that morning. The sight of the corpse, stretched out on a long table, hardly tended to soothe my nerves. I hurriedly retreated to the front porch.

THE hour arrived. Trailing after the warden, two prison physicians, and another newspaperman, I went down the steps to the lower floor, through two rooms and a corridor which ran between rows of prison cots, into the execution chamber.

I found myself in a room about 15 feet square. Around three walls ran a row of seats for witnesses. In one corner was a switchboard with three switches. In the center of the room was the chair itself, a squarely built

wooden affair, facing toward the east and painted white. It rested on a rubber-covered platform some five feet square which rose two inches above the concrete floor. On the platform at the foot of the chair was a stationary stool, on which, I later learned, the condemned man's feet were to be placed.

A series of notches cut in the facing of the south window bore silent evidence to the number of men who had gone to their death in the chair. The notches number seventy-six.

As we sat waiting for Gaskins to be brought in, I found myself wondering if I would be able to witness calmly what was about to happen. It was one thing, I thought, to see a fatal automobile wreck which you had no idea would happen until it did; it was something far different to enter a room knowing you were there to see a man brought in and put to death.

My hands trembled slightly, I noticed.

THESE thoughts were interrupted when the warden opened a door in the west wall and left the room. The door, I learned, led to the death cells, where men are confined while waiting to go to the chair.

A breathless—for me—wait ensued. I listened for the ominous tread of the death march. It came, but it hardly was what I had expected. A few shuffling steps sounded on the other side of the wall. The door opened. The warden, followed by a deputy, the prisoner, and the chaplain, passed through. All were walking slowly.

Upon entering the chamber, the condemned man walked straight to the chair and climbed into it. He was slightly built, his complexion tinged

WATCH MEN DIE

By RANDY FORT

with the sallowness of prison. His hair had been clipped close to his head. He wore a shabby blue serge suit, the right trouser leg of which was rolled up to his knee, a striped shirt, a stringy brown tie, and tan shoes.

"Dressed in his poor best," I thought, "to meet his Maker."

I felt more nervous by far than he looked.

NO TIME was wasted. The electrician, with the aid of a "trusty," made fast the straps binding the condemned man to the chair—one on each arm, one on each leg, and one around the chest. An electrode was fastened around the bare calf of his right leg.

The warden placed himself in front of the man. "Have you anything you would like to say?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Gaskins. "I want to say that I did not kill my wife. I went into the house to get my gun, and, since we had been quarreling, she thought I wanted to shoot her with it. She grabbed me and we struggled. In the fight the gun went off and she was killed."

"Now, will all of you who believe my story please raise your hands?"

Not knowing what to do, I glanced about the little room. No one had raised his hand.

The man repeated his request.

This time he received the response he desired, everyone present held up his hand.

"Thank you," said the man in the chair, gratefully.

THE electrician quickly moved forward and fastened on Gaskins' head the second electrode, a cap-like device which fitted on the top and back of the head and from the front of

which hung a small white piece of cloth which partially obscured the man's face.

Chaplain E. C. Atkins, who never has witnessed an actual electrocution, though he attends all the condemned men, patted Gaskins lightly on the arm and left the room. The warden touched his hand and said, "Well, good-by, old man."

"Goodby!" almost shouted Gaskins, "good-by to all of you!"

"Good-by!" I heard myself replying, for all the world as if I were speaking to a friend leaving for a week-end trip.

Once more I realized that I was trembling.

THE warden took his place at one of the switches, flanked by the warden of the women's prison and the warden of the state prison tuberculosis hospital, both of which institutions are located near the men's prison. The electrician stood near them, holding a cord.

Almost simultaneously came a pull on the cord, the throwing of the three switches, a noise like an iron bar falling on a wooden floor, and the buzz of the electric current.

The prayer on Gaskins' lips was hushed abruptly.

Strangely enough, with the pulling of the switches, my own nervousness left me.

The man's body stiffened. That part of it between the chest-strap and the leg-straps bulged upward out of the seat. In this position it remained for 45 seconds, then the current was cut off. The body slumped over, held in a sitting position only by the straps.

After three or four minutes, the doctors stepped forward and applied stethoscopes to the man's chest.

"More," they signaled, indicating that the heart action had not completely stopped.

Again the current was turned on, this time for 30 seconds. Again the short wait, the application of stethoscopes. This time English Gaskins was dead.

TWO Negroes, one a little hunchback, came into the room and helped the electrician loosen the straps. As they removed the mask, I had a close view of the dead man's face. The eyes were closed, but the mouth was open. The face was a blue-green color, as was the flesh of the leg where the electrode had been fastened.

The body was carried out, laid on a table just outside the door—and it was all over.

I have gone into detail in describing this first electrocution because it is typical of all others in essential respects.

After the Gaskins electrocution, I was assigned to cover all executions at the State prison. These are the ones I have attended:

1. Eddie Marsh, 16-year-old Negro, accused of killing a white man. This little

—FIFTEEN SECONDS FROM ETERNITY—

NOT many newspapermen, comparatively speaking, find themselves assigned to witness the execution of a condemned man, perhaps to interview him as he sits in the electric chair about 15 seconds from Eternity.

It is not an assignment eagerly sought after. But, since such an assignment is part of the news-writer's job in states where capital punishment is inflicted, the Editor sought to obtain from some reporter a frank, comprehensive account of his experiences in the prison death chamber, his reactions to the spectacle and his feeling in regard to capital punishment.

Randy Fort, managing editor of the Milledgeville Times, a weekly in Georgia's institutional city, was asked to write such an account. He did so in an article you will find as absorbing as any you have read in The Quill in a long time.

Mr. Fort attended the University of Alabama and Emory University, receiving his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Journalism from Emory. He has written articles for newspaper magazine sections, fraternity, trade and other magazines. An editorial written by Mr. Fort for the Milledgeville Times won that paper the H. H. Dean Trophy for the best editorial appearing in a Georgia newspaper in the last year, the announcement being made at the annual meeting of the Georgia Press Association.



Mr. Fort

fellow met his fate bravely, asking repentance for his sins. I shall never forget the way his legs, too short to reach the "footstool," dangled as he sat in the chair.

2. "Slick" Johnson, a notorious character from southwest Georgia, accused of slaying his brother-in-law. He was described as "the coolest man who ever went to the chair in Georgia." When he entered the chamber, he went around the room shaking hands with the many witnesses. Coming to a bald-headed man, he said jovially, "Well, friend, my hair's short like your'n." And, upon getting into the chair, he remarked to the electrician, "You'll have to show me how to do. I ain't ever been in one of these before." I always shall admire "Slick" Johnson for his remarkable composure.

3. Albert Jackson, Negro, convicted of beating an aged couple to death to get their money. Two women, one a daughter of the man Jackson was accused of killing, witnessed this electrocution, and neither of them gave visible evidence of being nervous or disturbed.

4. Jim Parker, an Illinois boy who had moved South to Florida and later to Georgia, executed for murdering his wife and child.

Parker, I always will believe, was done a horrible injustice. I talked with him late on the night before he went to the chair and he told me a pitiful story, a story which was believed by the prison officials as well

as by me, of how his paramour actually had committed the murders and he helped her bury the bodies because he loved her too well; of how he had been tortured in jail; of how he had kept his mouth shut and was going to the chair to save the woman he loved.

As Parker talked to me that night, he shook like a leaf, his voice quivered, and tears ran down his cheeks.

The next day, when he was placed in the chair and asked to make a statement, he refused. I obtained permission from the warden to interview him as he sat there in the chair. And, in reply to my questions, he replied that he held unwaveringly to what he had told me the previous night. I shook hands with him, then he died.

If you want a new sensation, interview a man who is strapped in the electric chair and about 15 seconds from eternity. Yes, Parker is another man I shall never forget.

Incidentally, the woman Parker died to shield has since been tried for the murders and released for want of evidence.

PERHAPS the most surprising feature of the electrocutions I have seen is the utter calmness of all the victims. Every man I have seen go to the chair entered the dreaded chamber quietly, climbed into the chair of his own accord, and took his bitter dose without flinching.

Another surprising fact is that not one of the men actually confessed in the chair to doing the crime for which he was paying the supreme penalty. Two said in their last statements that they were not guilty, one declared he was guilty of participation in the crime but not of the murder itself, while the remaining two said nothing at all about the crimes for which they were being executed but declared they were sure of salvation in the next world.

It takes more electricity to kill a little man than it does a large one, and more to kill a Negro than a white man. A small negro often is given three or four "shots."

I have not found electrocutions hard to watch, though many others do. Often people come to see an execution but turn back at the door of the chamber. Others who do come in are more frightened than the man in the chair.

SINCE the Gaskins case, I have experienced only very slight nervousness while in the chamber, and it always leaves me the instant the switches are thrown. Many other witnesses have my experience. When Parker died, I was the only witness.

At one execution, I sat by a man who appeared unusually nervous. He leaned over to me and whispered, "This is a hell of a way for an undertaker to feel, but I can't help it."

One consoling point for the witness is that all electrocutions in Georgia take place in the daylight. The death warrant usually specifies that the man (no woman has ever been electrocuted in Georgia) shall go to the chair between ten in the morning and two in the afternoon. Most executions occur around 11 o'clock.

Being present at these electrocutions has not necessarily made me an opponent of capital punishment. I regard these things as do the officials at the prison, as unpleasant necessities.

But do not think for an instant that those wardens like the job of executing. Several times I have seen them wait unsmilingly for the zero hour to arrive, looking off into space, and muttering, "I wish the governor would stop this thing."

EVERYONE who witnesses electrocutions regularly soon finds that it will not do to get morbid about the business. The atmosphere that pervades the execution chamber at the time of an execution is not one of deep solemnity. The assembled witnesses talk about fishing, or politics, or the weather. They listen interestedly to what the condemned man has to say, and watch as interestedly his physical reactions in the chair. Often they tell jokes or make wisecracks. It's like being broke—you get used to it, even if you might not like it so well.

And that, I think, is the most sensible attitude.

That, also, is why I don't mind at all this part of my job. It is, to me, highly preferable to covering a political speech or a dry-as-dust convention.

Cash in on the Campus

(Continued from page 6)

for material in several well known magazines. This, together with their correspondence jobs, made college financially possible. But the number of university men and women sending material to editors is comparatively small in spite of the fact that journalism departments and English courses are constantly crowded. The student journalist should constantly study the market. The sale of one's own writings gives the embryo a much desired feeling of confidence and brings the conscientious student the realization that four years' play time has not been spent entirely in vain.



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(Continued from page 5)

bear to pass up the \$570 so I struck out horseback for Olympia to negotiate a type loan. They were as hard up as we, so I continued the 100 extra miles to Portland, only to meet the same rebuff. Stereotype was just coming out, so I asked the type founder why I couldn't get stereotyped plates of several columns of notices and then saw out the descriptions and names and set each in by hand as needed. "That's a fine idea," he said. "You're a bright boy." So I carried the stereotyped plates back with me, saved the \$570 job by spending \$40, and spared a lot of work in setting notices later."

AS MANY as 200 of the timber purchase notices, less than two column inches each, appeared in subsequent single issues, which at times were required to include a two-page supplement. Each issue also carried private advertising. Five hundred subscribers within a 30-mile radius added \$3 each per year to the paper's coffers.

It is regrettable that an issue of the paper cannot be reproduced for you. You would enjoy it whether you sit behind a New York City news desk or plod the streets of Claremore, Okla. While the land notices predominated the home-set portion of the *Vidette*, they by no means constituted it. The paper was "the purveyor of all available local and territorial news" and ran from two to three columns of pungent editorials that would make many a modern editor sit up and take notice. Amusing though it seems today, all the local news was carried inside while page 1 was filled with anecdotes, clipped editorial quips and territorial advertising set up and printed from syndicate forms in Portland.

"I was particular about the appearance of my front page so I had it printed in Portland," Mr. Calder explained. "I knew they could do a neater job than we could with our clumsy equipment." You may chuckle at the theory, but you cannot get Mr. Calder to see anything humorous about it.

NEWs values played no part in the allocation of items, and no display lines other than single-line boldface caps were used. The death of the city founder's son was chronicled in a short story in the center of page 3. Cor-

respondence from outlying districts consisted of an occasional personal letter from an interested subscriber. The *Vidette* often carried some striking art displays for its early day. In his crude little shop, a local carpenter whittled out woodcuts for illustrations in editorial promotion plans for the territory.

The men who founded the journalistic outpost on the West coast tide-water were a team with business acumen. Although they developed a newspaper of merit and brought a valuable editorial service, their profit and loss ledger stands as their greatest achievement. Twenty-four hundred per cent in 10 months. The figures stand as a challenge across 50 years to the sharpest cost accountants. Did we hear a 1932 publisher accepting the challenge?

AT DEADLINE

(Continued from page 2)

man Roe, former field director of the National Editorial Association and publisher of the Northfield (Minn.) *News*, spoke on "Shopping for a Country Weekly" before the 1931 convention of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity, at Minneapolis. His remarks later were incorporated into an article which appeared under the same title in the February issue of *THE QUILL*.

We have been fortunate in obtaining a limited supply of pamphlets containing Mr. Roe's remarks in full. They will be distributed, as long as they last, to those who send *self-addressed, stamped envelopes*. First come, first served.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER has offered readers of *THE QUILL* an opportunity to obtain a pamphlet containing remarks made by Dean Ackerman, director of the Pulitzer School of Journalism at Columbia University, at a recent meeting in New York. For further information, turn to the advertisement on the back cover.

HERE'S a word of appreciation for flowers received at *THE QUILL* office recently from Joe Mitchell Chapple, publisher of *Reader's Rapid Review*, who said: "I don't know of any magazine that I read with more

interest than your periodical," and from Roland C. Hartman, editor of *Everybody's Poultry Magazine*, who commended the staff for its "good editorial job" and urged it to "keep up the good work."—R. L. P.

ROBBIN COONS (Louisiana '25) is employed by the Associated Press in Hollywood, California.

* * *

JOSEPH PULITZER (National Honorary), publisher of the St. Louis (Mo.) *Post-Dispatch*, and members of his family made a two months' summer tour of far-western states, returning to St. Louis by way of Canada.

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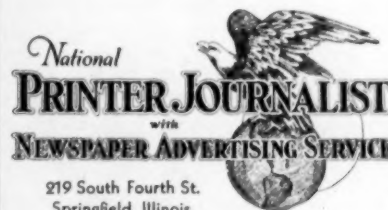
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WHO «» WHAT «» WHERE

QUINTON GRIFFITH (Missouri '32) has been named editor of the *Okemah* (Okla.) *Ledger* and the *Okfuskee County News*, Okemah. He is also continuing as city editor of the *Okemah Daily Leader* and correspondent for the *Tulsa* (Okla.) *Daily World*.

BERNARD SOBEL (Purdue '10), for many years publicity director for Florenz Ziegfeld, is now columnist and drama critic for the *New York Daily Mirror*. He began his new work shortly after the death of the *Follies* producer last July.

LEON W. BERRY (Oregon State '29) is a member of the editorial staff of the *Elgin* (Ore.) *Recorder*.

CHARLES H. MACK (Oregon State '31) has joined the staff of the *Klamath Falls* (Ore.) *Morning News* and *Evening Herald*.

ROLAND C. HARTMAN (Wisconsin '29) resigned as editor of *Poultry Tribune* and *Hatchery Tribune* to become editor of *Everybody's Poultry Magazine*, Hanover, Pa., Sept. 1. He is co-author of a textbook, "Hatchery Management," published in August by the Orange Judd Publishing Company of New York City.

ALFRED M. LEE (Pittsburgh '27), Kennedy T. Friend Fellow in sociology at Yale University, was appointed press agent for the Independent Republican Party of Connecticut and campaign director for Milton Conover, independent candidate for United States Senator. Lee, who was granted sufficient time by the sociology department at Yale to handle the political campaign, is making a study of newspaper propaganda for his Ph.D. degree in sociology. He formerly was press agent for the Pittsburgh traffic commission and promotion manager of the *Brownsville* (Pa.) *Telegraph*.

JAMES C. HEARTWELL (Oregon State '33), journalism student, varsity athlete and president of the Interfraternity Council at Oregon State College, Corvallis, has been removed from St. Luke's Hospital, Chicago, to his home at Long Beach, Calif., where he is recovering from a near-fatal attack of spinal meningitis.

Heartwell, apparently in good health, left Portland, Ore., early in September to attend the national convention of Theta Chi social fraternity in New York City as a delegate from his chapter at Oregon State. He was removed from his berth in an unconscious condition when his train reached Chicago. Four specialists called in by railroad officials despaired of his life. His fight against the disease is de-

scribed by physicians as one of the few to succeed.

H. W. FRIER (Illinois '27), of the advertising department of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, an alumnus member of both Theta Chi and Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity, was assisted by national officers of the two fraternities in arranging for Heartwell's treatment pending arrival of his family from California.

Twelve more Kansas editors have been added to that group known as "the superior editors of the state." They were informed of their election at the annual fall banquet of the Kansas Editorial Golf Association held Oct. 15 at Manhattan, Kan. Selection of the editors was in the hands of the Kansas State college chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity.

The editors chosen were W. T. BECK, *Holton Recorder*; E. A. BRILES, *Stafford Courier*; CHARLES H. BROWNE, *Horton Headlight-Commercial*; AUSTIN V. BUTCHER, *Altoona Tribune*; MRS. MAY FRINK CONVERSE, *Wellsville Globe*; BEN S. HUDSON, *Fredonia Daily Herald*; JACK LAWRENCE, *Council Grove Republican*; O. W. LITTLE, *Alma Enterprise*; JOHN REDMOND, *Burlington Republican*; OSCAR STAUFFER, *Arkansas City Traveler*; CHARLES TOWNSLEY, *Great Bend Tribune*, and L. F. VALENTINE, *Clay Center Times*. Each was given a certificate of merit.

In addition, JOHN GALLOWAY, *Hutchinson News*, and GENE KEMPER, *Emporia Gazette*, were cited for extraordinary work in the field of sports.

Newspaper workers heretofore chosen as "superior editors" are HENRY J. ALLEN, *Wichita Beacon*; LESLIE COMBS, formerly of the *Emporia Gazette*; CHARLES H. SESSIONS, *Harold T. Chase* and E. E. KELLY, *Topeka Daily Capital*; MRS. CORA G. LEWIS, *Kinsley Graphic*; FRANK MOTZ, *Ellis County News*, Hays; LESLIE WALLACE, *Larned Tiller and Toiler*; J. P. RUPPENTHAL, *Russell Record*; CHARLES F. SCOTT, *Iola Register*; VICTOR MURDOCK, *Wichita Eagle*; T. E. MILLIGAN, *Ft. Scott Tribune*; H. M. BRODRICK, *Marysville Advocate*; S. T. OSTERHOLT, *Holton Signal*; MISS MARION ELLET, *Concordia Blade-Empire*; JACK HARRIS, *Chanute Tribune*, and THOMAS E. THOMPSON, *Howard Courant*.

The following editors, no longer living, have been admitted to the newspaper "hall of fame": GEORGE W. MARBLE, *Ft. Scott Tribune*; JOHN R. HARRISON, *Beloit Gazette*, and W. Y. MORGAN, *Hutchinson News*.

HENRY FOWLES PRINGLE (Cornell '19), author of "Theodore Roosevelt,"

winner of the Pulitzer prize for the best American biography, has been appointed to the staff of the Pulitzer School of Journalism, Columbia University. He will lecture on "Current Political Problems and Personalities." His newspaper experience includes former staff membership on the *New York Sun*, the *New York World* and the *New York Globe*.

DEWITT REDDICK (Texas '25), adjunct professor of journalism in the University of Texas, is preparing a research paper on various aspects of censorship of the press in other nations of the world. His paper is based on research done during the summer in the graduate college of the University of Texas and on personal observation and study in Europe in 1931.

GRANVILLE PRICE (Texas '27), copyreader on the *New York Herald Tribune*, spent his summer vacation at the home of his parents in Austin, Texas, and at Galveston where he formerly was city editor of the *Galveston Tribune*.

MURRAY P. NEAL (Baylor '31) is police reporter on the *El Paso* (Tex.) *Herald-Post*.

WILL ARCH PAYNE (Baylor '31) is on the telegraph desk of the *Dallas* (Tex.) *Dispatch*.

THOMAS SCOTT (JACK) ADAMS (Louisiana '25) is with the *New Orleans* (La.) bureau of the Associated Press.

Nine pledges of the Western Reserve University chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity, were initiated into the fraternity September 17 in ceremonies held in the Scarab Club in Detroit and conducted by five past national presidents of the fraternity.

The men initiated, all active in journalistic and other activities on the Western Reserve campus, were MICHAEL CASSEL, ANTHONY COPPOLINO, DONALD FONDA, JOSEPH GAMBATESE, WALTER JOHNS, WILLIAM KUNKLE, ELMER KVSELA, CHARLES MESNICK and JOHN HUTH.

The past presidents of the fraternity who conducted the initiation were LEE A. WHITE, of the *Detroit News*; T. HAWLEY TAPPING, alumni secretary at the University of Michigan; GEORGE F. PIERROT, managing editor of the *American Boy* magazine; FRANKLIN M. RECK, assistant managing editor of the *American Boy*, and ROBERT B. TARR, of the *Pontiac Press*. CYRIL ARTHUR PLAYER, of the *Detroit News*, co-author with Mr. White of the present ritual of the fraternity, also was present.

The initiation was witnessed by 23 other Detroit alumni members of the fraternity.

Germany's Brownshirt Press

(Continued from page 7)

over 9,000, has his goal for Christmas set at 14,000 and his ultimate mark at 20,000 in a town of 80,000. His ten- or twelve-page tabloid-size paper (most German papers are tabloid-size) is rapidly gaining converts to the Brownshirt "army" as well. Its well dressed editor now has 20 advertising solicitors on the street. His rate is 20 pfennigs per millimeter (about \$1 per column inch), and any advertiser anxious to obtain the Upper Silesia business of the Hitlerites apparently finds it wise to use the "*Deutsche Ostfront*." Fredrici has his paper printed by an opposition sheet at \$100 per day for the first 5,000 of his ten tabloid pages, with a sliding scale for additional thousands. Linotype operators in the plant who got \$25 for a 48-hour week in 1929 are now content with \$13.75. Editorial and business workers on the Hitler papers are satisfied with \$7.50 to \$10 a week.

These "Brownshirt" papers, conscious of their pulling power among the 14,000,000 Hitler voters, have discovered a new avenue for exchange of these propaganda possibilities. The "Trommeler" cigarette factory in Dresden, under management of a Hitler follower, has volunteered to cancel its publicity appropriation and give its budgeted expenditure for that purpose to Hitler headquarters, provided his papers lend their support in putting over the product, which has been labeled with a Hitler emblem. The factory also advertises in the "chain" at regular space rates. As a result a large percentage of the membership of the party has switched to the smoking of "Trommelers," and the manufacturers have turned over sufficient publicity money to the Brownshirts to supply stream-lined cars for Hitler's provincial headquarters. The proceeds of the mutually profitable arrangement are mounting monthly, leaders report.

BECAUSE the Hitler movement has as its goal the political overthrow of the present German government, the Hitler papers are faced with the constant spectre of suspension, which is the government's much-used and well-sharpened weapon. That does not bother Hitler's enthusiastic newsmen. So great is their devotion and reverence for Hitler precepts that, although the nine Silesian papers have been suspended by the government eight times, varying from five days to

six weeks, during the one year of their existence, the "Brownshirt" editors cannot be bothered with sparing the pen. Most of them already have served behind the bars, in the manner of criminals, for their political ideas and ideals.

This "chain" is unique at the present time, then, not only for its spectacular success in amassing dollars during hard times, but also for the

fearless crusading of its editors and uniformed supervising "captains" and "generals." Theirs is an enthusiasm nurtured by constant conflict with constituted authority. It is carrying them to brilliant success, both in circulation and editorial influence. If the Hitler movement succeeds, it will, in a large measure, have its newspapers to thank.

PERCY H. LANDRUM (Kentucky '31) is associate editor of the Campbellsville (Ky.) *News-Journal*. He formerly was with the *La Feria* (Tex.) *News*, and the *Hidalgo County News*, Pharr, Texas.



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«» EDITORIALS «»

STUDENTS TURN HISTORIANS

JOURNALISM students at the University of Idaho, under the direction of Prof. Elmer F. Beth, have undertaken to prepare a history of Idaho newspapers and newspapermen. The first section of the history has been completed.

This project seems most praiseworthy and one that could well be followed by the various schools and departments of journalism throughout the country.

Every state should have a comprehensive, accurate and complete history of journalism within its borders. Upon such state records the historians of the future could draw for their national histories of journalism. The schools and departments of journalism which undertake the preparation of such histories will be rendering a valuable service both to the profession and to their respective states.

Only students who have shown themselves to be accurate, thorough and wholly interested in newspaper work should be assigned to assist in the writing of such histories, however, their theses, required in most schools for graduation, would be devoted then to worthwhile research and not to some of the rather meaningless surveys undertaken by some students.

THANKS TO THE NATION'S PRESS

ONE of the greatest and far-reaching services performed by the press of the United States, one which most newspaper readers take as a matter of course, is the collection and tabulation of election results. Particularly is this true in a Presidential year like 1932 when the country, disturbed by unusual and adverse times, is divided into such partisan camps.

Some 35,000,000 citizens, more or less, will cast their ballots. Within a few hours, or perhaps a day or two if the contest proves unusually close, they will expect to know definitely just what has happened and whom has been selected to occupy the White House for the next four years. And they will know.

An army of newspaper and press association workers, each member of which knows well his or her particular duty will mobilize for the task. Extra workers, telegraph and telephone tolls, leased wires, special correspondents, overtime for mechanical workers, extra editions—all these and other items will add considerably to the heavy overhead of the nation's press but the job must be done.

Were it not for the part played by the press, the results would not be known definitely for days, weeks or months. But the press has so organized for the undertaking that the election returns will be spread to all corners of the country in an amazingly short time.

Election time, while bringing a major task to the newspapers and press associations of the country, also furnishes newsgatherers and writers with some of the most colorful and exciting hours of their careers. Telephones clamor, bulletins from all corners of the state and nation pour into the office, typewriters clack furiously, messengers dash in and out—to the uninitiated it would seem a hopeless, helpless, disorganized bedlam. To the cub or the veteran newspaper worker alike, it is part of his daily job—with bells on. And how he loves it!

ILLINOIS TRIES AN EXPERIMENT

AN interesting experiment is being conducted by Lawrence W. Murphy, director of the School of Journalism at the University of Illinois.

Ten junior honor students in the school, five men and five women, together with eight alternates, make up the "honor group" with which the experiment is to be conducted. The group has been given complete freedom in the selection of studies during the junior and senior years in the university.

It will be interesting from the standpoint of the teacher, the student, the journalism school alumnus, the newspaper editor and others to learn the results of this freedom. Members of the group will be required to maintain averages of "good plus" to remain in the group.

AS THEY VIEW IT

THE very essence of modern journalism is the art of coloring the news, of clothing the bare bones of fact, or assumed fact, with the flesh of imagination, of interpretation, perhaps of prejudice or bias, but never, in any circumstances, resting upon the bare recital of known facts.

"That is not to justify the substitution of imagination for facts, nor to condone the suppression of facts which, if given their due weight, might compel the painting of a word picture of a different color. There can be no extenuation of such practices. But if there is one lesson upon which more emphasis is laid than upon any other in the journalistic neophyte's apprenticeship, whether his mentor be a professor of journalism or a hard-boiled city editor, it is that he must write his story interestingly.

"In other words, he must color the news."

"The main difference between good news writing and the commonplace product of the 'leg man' is that the good reporter has learned how to apply his color so deftly that the brush-marks don't show, and at the same time to give his report precisely the tints and tones most likely to be appreciated by his editors and by the particular kind of readers for whom he is writing.

"All good writing, whether for a newspaper or for any other purpose, is written, must be written, with a specific type of reader in mind. Its color must be of a shade which is known or believed to appeal to that type.

"And the prevailing color-tone in American journalism is yellow.

"True, we don't call it 'yellow journalism' nowadays. We call it 'human interest.' But that, in itself, implies the coloring of the news to conform to an editorial concept of what is humanly interesting to the humans who are expected to read it. And since humanity in the mass is interested mainly in the more elemental manifestations, emotions and functions of humans and human nature, and since, moreover, every newspaper wants more circulation than it has, and since there are more potential readers in the lower strata of the social pyramid than on the rarefied peaks, what is more natural, almost inevitable, than the effort to reach downward for circulation, even though to do that involves coloring the news with the yellow tint of 'human interest'?"—Frank Parker Stockbridge, editor, the *American Press*.

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Dean Ackerman Says:

"I am tired of hearing the press criticized by business men, bankers, advertisers and educators. Despite its imperfections and faults, journalism is performing public services equalled by those of no other institution in the United States.

"When men say that the press is superficial and transient, that it goes about its business in a hit-and-miss, grab-and-take manner, when they charge that it is corrupted or influenced by sinister forces and that editors and reporters are magicians, they seek to destroy what in many cases they envy or fear. Frequently, too, by their cynical and disillusioned attitude toward their work and the institution they represent, newspapermen promote this criticism.

"It has seemed to me for some time that it is necessary for newspaper and advertising men to have more pride and confidence in journalism. The business of publishing newspapers will succeed financially only as a result of the constant progress of the profession of journalism. Everyone knows that it is more difficult now than ever to have ideals. But if the press of America ever loses its idealism, if newspapermen lose their faith and confidence in the press, there will be a disintegration of public morale far greater than anything we have witnessed up to the present time."

These sentiments so accurately reflect our own views on this subject that we felt the urge to commend them to your favorable consideration.

We thought so much of Dean Ackerman's address to the newspapermen at the recent New York Federation meeting that we had it reproduced in a little 8-page pamphlet.

Perhaps you would like to preach this kind of gospel. If so, please advise how many pamphlets you could use. No expense involved. A free-will offering on our part.

Dean Ackerman wisely classifies the newspaper as part of the social system and differentiates it in his thinking from every other form of advertising media.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

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NEW YORK CITY

(The oldest advertisers' and publishers' journal in America, established in 1884)